



Ed Skoog's first collection, *Mister Skylight*, was published by [Copper Canyon Press](#) in 2009. To purchase his book online at ► [Amazon.com](#)

Born in Topeka, KS, in 1971, Skoog attended Topeka High School, Kansas State, and University of Montana. After many years working at the New Orleans Museum of Art and the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, he now lives in Seattle and Washington, DC.

In 2005, Skoog was awarded the Marble Faun Prize in Poetry by the Pirate's Alley William Faulkner Society and the Lyric Poetry Award from the Poetry Society of America. His poems have been published in many magazines, including *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Threepenny Review*, and *The Paris Review*.

Wild Hog in the Cemetery

Hill of stubble in moonlight, the hog
bristles across the lawn,
eats whole bouquets, eats bouquets whole,
plowing tusk through silk rose and fresh lily.
Our headstones surrender their salt.
Wilder animals would not perturb us.
Worse hogs will cross and sand
down names. This one, at least, grunts life.
He would eat hog, could he make one die.

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Sonnet

To leave you is like waking, or refusing to wake,
in that way the body has of haunting itself.

Returned to your hand, I'm an astronomer
unable to lower my telescope, or look away.

You are the telescope, too. Close, you show me
far reaches that are themselves not even the beginning.

Not to have left you is life in an alarm,
the unstraightened bed interrupted and warm.

But I always bring bright souvenirs from our travels,
a feather, a coin, a bee, astonishing in my palm.

Minutes past your touch, what our bodies were
is disappearing like a ship caught in polar ice,

covered up, compressed into deep. To leave you
is where the icicles fall, and the fog we wake to.

The Carolers

in scarves and boots
turn around our neighbor's pine
spill grog into snow,
approaching our porch with
O Come All Ye Faithful.
A few stumble or sing wrong,
open the door, Jim for
come let us adore him.
Annual Christian, pipered
by their pied joy, I lean
to follow when they go.
A hand holds me back.
The lead caroler, encountering
our Ford glazed with ice,
undeterred, opens the door
and crawls right through,
knees on the seat, gloves
on the dash and headrest.
The rest follow, pulling
We Saw Three Ships
through the car like a rope.
Soon I am falling asleep
in vast winter bedroom silence,
and I am singing with them
through local traffic
houses towns lives
exile and years of night.



Ed Skoog
Distinguished Kansas Poet

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Home at Thirty

On the street at midnight,
I hear a hat box latch
fall open in an attic closet,
and then the silence
of the library of Alexandria.
Even the low clouds'
dark stucco seems applied
by the drowsiest journeyman.
The fire hydrant stares
from its tri-color face
at a branch fallen
in the street. Up the chain,
a snail punches its
antennae, a great excursion
to the loose bolt
where a little water drips.

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